

Congressman Childers Votes to Strengthen Rural Communities, Protect Public Health

July 9, 2009

Washington, DC - Today, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) voted for legislation that will protect Americans' food safety, boost rural economies, protect Americans against price fluctuations for necessities and help feed struggling families. To maintain fiscal responsibility, the Agriculture Appropriations Act (H.R. 2997) also cuts millions of dollars from programs that are not working.

"Rural communities like those in Mississippi's First Congressional District have been hit especially hard by our current economic crisis," said Congressman Childers "With this important legislation, we will reinvest in rural communities, spurring business growth, supporting new infrastructure, and bringing new jobs and hope to local communities. In addition, the bill's cuts in unnecessary funding and programs represent the kind of fiscal discipline that will help balance our budget and get our economy back on track."

The bill helps rural communities hit by the economic crisis. It builds on the success of the Recovery Act with investments in community facilities, housing, water projects and rural businesses - creating opportunities for growth and development in every community.

The bill invests in the following areas to strengthen rural America:

- USDA programs important to rural communities including rural housing, water projects, community facilities, and economic development efforts. These programs not only sustain our rural communities, but also create new opportunities for growth and development in the nation's small towns and economies.
- Agriculture research conducted by the Agricultural Research Service and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture.
- Continuing to modernize the Farm Service Agency's information technology networks and databases in order to provide more effective and secure service for the agency's customers.

To protect individuals, including senior citizens, faced with rising food costs and shrinking wages, the legislation increases nutrition aid to families. It expands services and creates new programs to help ensure that American families do not go hungry.

The Agriculture Appropriations Act also protects consumers by giving the agency that regulates our commodities markets like energy and food, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), the staff and resources it needs to do its job. We have seen too clearly the impact that improper speculation in these markets can have on the price of oil and gas. This additional oversight will help protect the American people from needless price spikes in the cost of basic necessities.

A pro-gun, pro-life Mississippian, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) represents the First Congressional District in North Mississippi. He is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and serves on the House Agriculture and Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers co-chairs the reestablished bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus and was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force. For more information, visit <http://www.childers.house.gov/>

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